

**Montana Department of Military Affairs
Disaster & Emergency Services Division
State Emergency Coordination Center**

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Situation Report for August 4, 2003 (issued @ 14:00 hrs.)

Wildfires of 2003

Attention * - New information shown in today's report displayed in ***Bold Italics*** type.

I. - **Background Information:**

- Fire activity throughout the state continues to generate concern on the part of many Montana citizens and lots of work for local government officials. High ridge temperatures, drying conditions, and possibly thunderstorms later in the week may create a substantial increase in fire activity. Fire managers believe a shift to these conditions could easily create a long summer siege.

II. - **Current Montana Fire Conditions:** (as reported to NRCC *August 1st, 2003 (2200)*)

Light initial attack – 10 new fires for 7,134 acres

- ***Flathead Area Command (Mann) is managing the large fires on the Flathead National Forest, Kootenai National Forest and Glacier National Park.***
 - ***Wedge Canyon – Type 1 Incident Management Team (Bennett), 25,224 acres, 45% contained, 20 miles E of Eureka, MT.***
 - ***Robert – Type 1 Incident Management Team (Stam), 24,400 acres, 40% contained, 8 miles N of Columbia Falls, MT.***
 - ***Trapper Creek Complex – Type 1 Incident Management Team (Raley). Complex is 20,500 acres, 40% contained. This Complex is made up of the Trapper Creek (15,900 acres – 35% contained), Paul Bunyan (300 acres – 100% contained), Wolf Gun (4,300 acres – 35% contained) and Trout (1/4 acre – 50% contained) fires located 45 statute miles NE of Kalispell, MT.***
- ***Treasure County Complex – 10,510 acres, 75% contained. This Complex is made up of the Johnny (8,009 acres – 60% lined), Starks (1,053 acres – 100% lined) and Earl (1,448 acres – 100% lined) fires located 8 miles S of Hysham, MT.***
- ***Booth - 2,500 acres, 40% contained, 17 miles S of Colstrip, MT.***
- ***Black Frog Complex - Type 1 Incident Management Team (Frye), 75% contained. This Complex is made up of the Blackwall fire (4,496 acres), located 32 miles N of Salmon, Idaho and Frog Pond (2,082 acres), as well as numerous concentrations of spots on both fires for a total of 7,000 acres located 34 miles S of Hamilton, MT.***
- ***Little Salmon Creek Complex – This 8,625 acre lightning caused Wildland Fire Use complex is located 47 miles SE of Kalispell, MT in the Bob Marshall Wilderness. This***

complex, made up of the Pagoda (125 acres) and the Little Salmon (8,500 acres), is being managed to accomplish resource objectives.

- *Big Creek - 1,339 acres, 80% contained, 4 miles NW of Victor, MT.*
- *Porcupine Creek – 1,000 acres, 0% contained, 7 miles N of Nashua, MT.*
- *Hidden Lake – Type 2 Incident Management Team (Chrisman), 3,500 acres, 100% contained, 30 miles W of Dillon, MT.*
- *Musselshell Complex – 1,630 acres, 100% contained. This Complex is made up of the Queen’s Point (500 acres), Lodge (470), Fishel Creek (540), and FaHig/Delphia (200 acres) fires located 10 to 30 miles E of Roundup, MT.*

NATIONAL WEATHER SERVICE MISSOULA MT

426 AM MDT MON AUG 4 2003

WEST OF THE CONTINENTAL DIVIDE

Today - Partly Cloudy. Isolated Showers And Thunderstorms. Highs 77 To 87.

Tonight - Partly Cloudy. Slight Chance Of Showers And Thunderstorms. Lows 50 To 60.

Tuesday - Partly Cloudy. Slight Chance Of Showers And Thunderstorms. Highs 74 To 84.

CENTRAL MONTANA

Today - Partly Cloudy. Scattered Showers And Thunderstorms. Highs In The Mid 70s To Mid 80s.

Tonight - Partly Cloudy. Isolated Showers And Thunderstorms. Lows In The Lower 50s To Lower 60s.

Tuesday - Partly Cloudy. Highs In The 80s.

SOUTHWEST MONTANA

Today - Partly Cloudy. Isolated Showers And Thunderstorms. Highs In The Lower 70s

To Lower 80s.

Tonight - Partly Cloudy In The Evening Then Clearing. Isolated Showers And Thunderstorms. Lows In The Upper 40s To Mid 50s.

Tuesday - Partly Cloudy. Isolated Showers And Thunderstorms In The Afternoon. Highs In The Lower 70s To Mid 80s.

EASTERN AND SOUTHERN MONTANA

Today - Mostly Cloudy This Morning...Partly Cloudy This Afternoon. A Chance Of Thunderstorms. Highs In The Upper 70s Extreme Northeast... 80s Elsewhere.

Tonight - Partly Cloudy. A Chance Of Thunderstorms North. Lows 55 To 65.

Tuesday - Partly Cloudy. Becoming Mostly Cloudy Southwest. A Chance Of Afternoon Thunderstorms Southwest. Highs In The 80s.

III. - Summary of Actions being taken by Local Government Officials:

Local government resources from various jurisdictions have been actively engaged in fire fighting efforts, particularly during the past several days. The evacuation of residents whose properties have been threatened have been conducted as required.

<u>Local Emergency and Disaster Declarations</u>		<u>Date Filed</u>
Cascade County	Emergency Declaration (Box Canyon/Long Mtn.)	7/15/03
Garfield County	Disaster Declaration (Missouri Breaks)	7/15/03
Beaverhead County	Emergency Resolution (multiple fires)	7/17/03
Ravalli County	Emergency Declaration (Big Creek)	7/20/03
Flathead County	Emergency Declaration (Wedge Canyon)	7/21/03
Sanders County	Resolution (Level II Fire Restrictions)	7/29/03

IV. - Summary of State Activities and Resources Committed:

State Declaration:

On 7/18/03, Governor Judy Martz signed an Executive Order (# 14-03) in which she declared a statewide emergency thereby enabling mobilization of state resources (including the Montana National Guard) should they be needed to help protect the life, health and/or property of Montana's citizens.

FEMA Declarations:

FEMA Fire Management Assistance Declaration approved on July 23rd, 2003 for Missouri Breaks Complex fire.

FEMA Fire Management Assistance Declaration approved on July 25th, 2003 for Flathead County's Wedge Canyon and Roberts fires.

Requests for State Assistance:

- The Montana National Guard is assisting "initial attack" fire suppression operations by supplying 3 UH-60 (Blackhawk) Helicopters modules and one UH-1 Helicopter module and approximately 51 soldiers. One Blackhawk helicopter module is currently assigned to the Flathead Interagency Dispatch Center, another is assigned to the Helena Interagency Dispatch Center, and the third is assigned to Missoula. The UH-1 helicopter module is currently deployed to Billings. The Montana National Guard Personnel Resources currently allocated to wild land fire suppression duties stands at 51. The National Guard will be rotating in new air crews in Helena and Kalispell this weekend.
- One NG Liaison Officer has been assigned to the Northern Rockies Coordination Center (NGCC) in Missoula.
- MT Highway Patrol and MT Department of Transportation are supporting fire efforts with local jurisdictions and fire management to limit travel disturbances.

Status of State Emergency Coordination Center (SECC)

- Montana DES is providing support to local governments through the State Emergency Coordination Center in Helena. The SECC is currently operating at Activation Level III. Level III operations include a full staff 0800-1700 during weekdays with a duty officer on call after hours. Weekend operations will be staffed at Level II from 0800-1700 unless it becomes necessary to advance to a higher activation level.

? The State Emergency Coordination Center (SECC) will continue to monitor conditions and is prepared to provide 24-hour incident support to local governments. After office hours (i.e., 1700-0700) support is available through the DES Duty Officer who may be reached at (406) 841-3911.

Addendums to Situation Report

As of: **August 2nd, 2003**

Road Closures: Information is current as of 08-04-03

Southwest

U.S. 93 is now open 24 hours a day with no restrictions over Lost Trail Pass. Still closed are all trails between the Gibbonsville road and Highway 43, trailheads at Cabinet and Richardson creeks, the Anderson Mountain road, and the May Creek campground. The Foothills and Gibbonsville roads, west of Wisdom, in the Beaverhead-Deerlodge National Forest, will reopen Tuesday, August 5.

The Salmon River Road has now been cleared to allow one lane passage. The Panther Creek Road is impassable near Panther Creek's confluence with the Salmon River due to landslides.

Northwest

The Wedge Canyon fire, 6-miles south of the Canadian boarder, and the Robert fire, between Coram and West Glacier, are actively requiring the continued closure of Secondary 486 to all but essential traffic. The Going-to-the-Sun Road is closed from West Glacier to Logan Pass, due to fires. Logan Pass remains open, but the only access is from the east side of the park. Highway 2 on the south boundary of Glacier provides access to the east side of the park. The Inside North Fork Road (north and south of Polebridge) is open from Fish Creek to Big Prairie, just north of Polebridge, but is closed from Big Prairie north.

Reported Major Fire Activity:

Report Date: August 3rd, 2003

Wedge Canyon:

*Residences threatened: 100
Estimated Cost: \$11,000,000*

*Commercial Property: 7 Outbuildings/Other: 29
% contained: 45%*

Roberts Fire:

*Residences threatened: 0
Estimated Cost: \$7,100,000*

*Commercial Property: 6 Outbuildings/Other: 10
% contained: 40%*

Trapper Creek Complex:

*Residences threatened: 0
Estimated Cost: \$1,604,000*

*Commercial Property: 3 Outbuildings/Other: 8
% contained: 40%*

Treasure County Complex:

*Residences threatened: 15
Estimated Cost: \$326,972*

*Commercial Property: 2 Outbuildings/Other: 60
% contained: 75%*

Booth:

Residences threatened: 0
Estimated Cost: \$60,000

Commercial Property: 0 Outbuildings/Other: 0
% contained: 40%

Black Frog Complex:

Residences threatened: 87
Estimated Cost: \$8,380,000

Commercial Property: 9 Outbuildings/Other: 214
% contained: 75%

Porcupine Creek:

Residences threatened: 0
Estimated Cost: \$NR

Commercial Property: 0 Outbuildings/Other: 0
% contained: NR%

Little Salmon Complex:

Residences threatened: 1
Estimated Cost: \$228,500

Commercial Property: 0 Outbuildings/Other: 12
% contained: NR%

Big Creek:

Residences threatened: 0
Estimated Cost: \$ 4,031,784

Commercial Property: 0 Outbuildings/Other: 0
% contained: 100%

Ross Creek:

Residences threatened: 0
Estimated Cost: \$ 2,480,570

Commercial Property: 0 Outbuildings/Other: 0
% contained: 80%

Hidden Lake:

Residences threatened: 0
Estimated Cost: \$2,400,000

Commercial Property: 0 Outbuildings/Other: 0
% contained: 100%

Musselshell Complex:

Residences threatened: 0
Estimated Cost: \$130,000

Commercial Property: 0 Outbuildings/Other: 0
% contained: 100%

Current DES Situation Report From Flathead Area Command:

Wildfires in Glacier have caused the need for the evacuation of west Glacier and Apgar. There are approximately 250 homes in the area. The local Red Cross chapter has established a shelter in White Fish at the North Valley Hospital Basement.

Fire Restrictions and Closures

<u>Zone</u>	<u>Restrictions</u>	<u>Effective Date</u>
Northwestern Zone	Stage II Restrictions	July 28, 2003
Southwestern Zone	Stage II Restrictions	July 28, 2003
Central Montana Zone	Stage II Restrictions	July 28, 2003
South Central Zone	Stage II Restrictions	July 28, 2003
Eastern Montana Zone		
	<u>Stage I Restrictions (Billings)</u>	July 18, 2003

Stage II Restrictions

State & Private: Carbon, Stillwater, Sweet Grass counties July 25, 2003

Federal: Treasure, Musselshell, Bighorn, Yellowstone July 18, 2003

Stage I Restrictions (Lewistown)

July 21, 2003

Stage II Restrictions

State & Private: Liberty County

General Fire Information and Severity to Date

- Plum Creek has closed all private and public use on their holdings, logging operations are also shut down
- Beaverhead and Deerlodge National Forest have currently Plume Dominated Fire Conditions and are expected to continue for the next few days
- ***Ft Peck Fire on the Ft Peck Agency is called the Porcupine Creek Fire.***
- ***Wedge Canyon expanded on the Northern and Southern boundaries.***
- ***Roberts expanded on the Western boundary.***
- ***Currently there are no overnight facilities at Apgar or West Glacier.***
- ***Large Season ending storm not expected until late September or early October.***
- ***Closures are likely to remain in effect for the remainder of the season.***
- Energy Release Component
Lincoln Ranger District reports component same as 1988 when the Canyon Creek Fire started
Helena reports component is 14 points higher than when the Cave Gulch Fire started in 2000
- NW Area command
Burnout initiated by fire management on the Roberts and Wedge Canyon have proven successful to date
- ***General Cost for fires under Northern Rockies Coordination and acreage total [from Northern Rockies Priorities List -acreage estimate on active fires]:***
Cost: \$37.74 million Acreage: 116,255
- ***The Confederated Salish and Kootenai Tribes of the Flathead Nation have issued a resolution that due to the extremely high fire danger has closed the tribal forest and range lands. All previous privileges of access are temporarily suspended and all tribal trust and tribal fee, forest and range lands are closed to public.***

Web Links:

Glacier National Park Fire Management:

<http://www.nps.gov/glac/resources/fires.htm>

Northern Rockies Interagency Information Center

<http://fs.fed.us/r1/fire/2003fires/index.htm>